

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9953

SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

INFO CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY MANILA

COMNAVSTA SUBIC BAY PHILIPPINES

S E C R E T JAKARTA 10523

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: MASS, ID, US

SUBJECT: SHIPS FOR INDONESIA

REF: (A) MANILA 11861, (B) STATE 200194, (C) STATE 181057
(ALL NOTAL)

1. WHEN MAJ. GEN. SOEMANTRI, DEFENSE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANT FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, CALLED ON ME TODAY TO PRESENT LIST OF EQUIPMENT (BEING FORWARDED SEPARATELY) INDONESIAN TEAM WILL WISH DISCUSS IN WASHINGTON, TO TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE HIM LIST OF EQUIPMENT RECOVERED FROM INDOCHINA (INCLUDING TOTAL OF SEVEN C-47'S) WHICH US IS PREPARED OFFER INDONESIA. LIST SPECIFIED TERMS OF TRANSFER AS SET FORTH IN REFS (B) AND (C).

2. I POINTED OUT THAT MAJOR ITEMS ON LIST WERE FOUR WHEC'S WHICH PRESIDENT FORD HAD MENTIONED TO PRESIDENT SUHARTO AT CAMP DAVID. I NOTED THAT THESE COMPRISED FOUR OF SIX WHEC'S RECOVERED FROM VIETNAM AND THAT OTHER TWO WERE BEING OFFERED TO PHILIPPINES. I CAUTIONED GEN. SOEMANTRI THAT THESE SHIPS COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO BE IN GOOD

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CONDITION SINCE THEY HAD HARD USE IN VIETNAM AND HAD RECEIVED

NO MAINTENANCE IN SUBIC DURING PAST FOUR MONTHS. I SAID THAT WE WOULD WELCOME VISIT BY INDONESIANS TO SUBIC TO INSPECT WHEC'S AND OTHER VESSELS BEING OFFERED THEM AND SUGGESTED THAT TRIP TAKE PLACE PRIOR TO TRAVEL OF INDONESIAN TEAM TO WASHINGTON IN MID-SEPTEMBER. I EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD PREVIOUSLY INFORMED PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAD APPROVED HAVING INDONESIAN TEAM COME TO SUBIC.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE TAKEN NO INITIATIVE TO ACQUAINT OURSELVES WITH DETAILS, WE UNDERSTAND FROM U.S. OFFICERS WHO HAVE SEEN FOUR WHEC'S THAT WHILE THEY INCLUDE THE BEST OF THE GROUP OF SIX RECOVERED FROM VIETNAM, THEY MAKE A DEPLORABLE INITIAL IMPRESSION, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF CONDITION IN WHICH THEY WERE LEFT BY VIETNAMESE BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN TOTALLY UNATTENDED SINCE THEY ANCHORED AT SUBIC. OBSERVERS HAVE COMMENTED ON GUNS WITHOUT BREECH BLOCKS, EQUIPMENT UNPROTECTED FROM WEATHER, AND REFUSE AND DEAD RATS INSIDE AND OUT. DESPITE EFFORTS WE HAVE MADE PREPARE INDONESIANS, WE ANTICIPATE THEY WILL BE SEVERELY DISAPPOINTED WHEN THEY SEE SHIPS. THIS DISAPPOINTMENT LIKELY BE MAGNIFIED WHEN THEY SEE OTHER VESSELS AT SUBIC EARMARKED FOR PHILIPPINES AND, PARTICULARLY, IF THEY LEARN THAT WE ARE OFFERING GOP ADDITIONAL SHIPS FROM JAPAN, INCLUDING TWO DE'S. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND CONSIDERING THAT WHEC'S ARE CENTER OF INDONESIAN INTEREST, LEAST WE CAN DO WOULD BE TO CLEAN UP WHEC'S PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF INDONESIAN TEAM SO THAT EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL APPEARANCE, AS A MINIMUM, IS PRESENTABLE; AND I STRONGLY URGE THAT THIS BE DONE. IN OUR VIEW U.S. NAVY INTEREST IN INDONESIA WOULD JUSTIFY SPECIAL EFFORT ON PART SUBIC BAY COMMAND. FROM COMMENTS MADE BY GEN. SOEMANTRI TODAY, WE ANTICIPATE INDONESIAN INSPECTION TEAM WILL BE READY TO TRAVEL TO SUBIC AS EARLY AS WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 8.

4. IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT DISPARITY BETWEEN OUR OFFER TO INDONESIANS AND THAT BEING MADE TO PHILIPPINES, I ASSUME OUR EXPLANATION WILL STRESS ASSISTANCE GOP IS PROVIDING US THROUGH USE OF BASES. IN CONNECTION WITH PREVIOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH INDONESIANS ON SHIPS, WE WERE ASSURED THAT NO EXCESS DE'S WERE AVAILABLE; HENCE, THERE MAY BE SOME RAISED EYEBROWS HERE WHEN IT BECOMES KNOWN WE ARE OFFERING DE'S TO PHILIPPINES.

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